



Michigan Department of State Police

Emergency Management Division Informational Letter

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TO: Local and District Emergency Management Coordinators
SUBJECT: Changes to the Damage Assessment Handbook (EMD Publication 901)

With the threat of terrorism and the frequency of emergencies and disasters on the rise, the Emergency Management Division has plans to update Michigan's damage assessment procedures at the state and local levels. To achieve this, EMD will be revising the Damage Assessment Handbook and the Damage Assessment Course and is requesting input from local emergency management programs. A brainstorming session has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 12, 2004, at 8:30 a.m. at the 2004 Summit, being held at the Grand Traverse Resort. **Representation from all local emergency management programs is encouraged.** Attendees should have experience in the assessment process.

This session is designed to seek effective SOLUTIONS. Attendees are encouraged to bring examples of procedures, forms that have been found to be effective and any other "lessons learned" that could benefit local programs. The session will be facilitated by EMD damage assessment staff. All attendees will be put into working groups focusing on the issues of local reporting forms, procedures and checklists. Some of the topics to be discussed (but not limited to) are:

- How do locals rate damage for flooded basements that can't be seen outside?
- How can county government get townships, villages, etc., to report damage more quickly?
- What on the Local Damage Survey Worksheet needs to be modified?
- How do we employ new technologies, such as GPS, E-Team, etc., to simplify the process?
- Should reporting templates be made for specific groups in the community to report damage (e.g. schools, universities, factories, etc.)?
- What can be done to make the Damage and Injury Assessment Form easier to use?
- What can be done to collect more accurate damage assessment data?

The Emergency Management Division does not seek to change our Damage Assessment process, just improve it. As you are aware, we are bound by law and FEMA requirements to assess the impact of disasters and emergencies, within certain parameters. EMD seeks to make our system the most efficient to better assist disaster affected communities in times of crisis.

If you plan to attend or have any questions, please contact Kristine Opsommer at 517-333-5022, email oppsommek@michigan.gov by Friday, October 1, 2004, at 5 p.m.. Attendance for this meeting is an eligible EMPG expense. Conference registration information can be found at www.michigan.gov/emd.

Sincerely,

JOHN ORT, CAPTAIN
Deputy State Director of Homeland Security
and Emergency Management

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